

Message Text

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S E C R E T GENEVA 8410

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FOR SCHAUFLE FROM WISNER

E.O. 1152: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: BRITISH CONSULTATIONS

1. IVOR RICHARD MET WITH THE NATIONALISTS ON OCT. 26. THEY DISCUSSED SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AT THE CONFERENCE. MUGABE SAID "I DON'T CARE WHERE I SIT AS LONG AS IT IS ACROSS THE TABLE FROM SMITH AND I CAN SEE HIM EYEBALL TO EYEBALL."

2. RICHARD AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE MOST IMPRESSED BY THE REASONABLE AND SENSIBLE BEHAVIOR OF THE NATIONALISTS AND ARE ACCORDINGLY ENCOURAGED ABOUT HOW THEY WILL HANDLE THEMSELVES AT THE CONFERENCE. RICHARD WAS PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY SITHOLE'S BEHAVIOR. SITHOLE TOLD HIM AS HE TOLD ME ON OCT. 27 THAT HE HAD COME TO GENEVA FOR A SETTLEMENT AND DID NOT INTEND TO LEAVE WITHOUT ONE. RICHARD WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT SITHOLE TOLD ME HIS DELEGATION HAD ADOPTED A "NO BOYCOTT, NO WALK OUT POLICY."

2. EVEN MORE POSITIVE THAN HIS MEETINGS WITH THE NATIONALISTS WERE THE MEETINGS WHICH RICHARD CONDUCTED WITH THE OBSERVERS. HE MET JOINTLY WITH KAMANA CHONA OF ZAMBIA, SALIM AND WARIOBA OF TANZANIA, MOGWE AND KHAMA'S PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM BOTSWANA

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AND ANYAOKU WHO IS SONNY RAMPHAL'S REPRESENTATIVE FROM

THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT (RICHARD PLANS TO DEAL WITH WALTER OF MAURITIUS IN A SEPARATE MEETING).

3. IN GENERAL THE FRONT LINE REPRESENTATIVES WERE MOST REASONABLE AND AGREED TO BE HELPFUL DURING THE CONFERENCE. THEY ARE PREPARED TO FLOAT PROPOSALS ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN AND TO BACK UP APPROACHES HE MAKES TO THE NATIONALISTS. THEY SHOWED IN RICHARD'S JUDGMENT, A REMARKABLE DEGREE OF COHESION EVEN THOUGH SALIM SEEMED TO BE DOING SO "IN SPITE OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS."

4. THE REPRESENTATIVES DID NOT PRESS THE ISSUE OF A BRITISH MINISTER OPENING THE CONFERENCE, RATHER THEY PHRASED THEIR QUESTION IN THE TERMS OF "DO YOU THINK THE NATIONALISTS ARE STILL UPSET". WHEN RICHARD SAID THE NATIONALISTS WERE NOT UPSET THEY DROPPED THE SUBJECT. THE REPRESENTATIVES ALSO RAISED WITH RICHARD BRITAIN'S COLONIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN RHODESIA. RICHARD MADE HIS INSTRUCTED POINT THAT BRITAIN DID NOT INTEND TO ASSIGN A GOVERNOR-GENERAL. THE AFRICANS COUNTERED WITH THE IDEA OF A HIGH COMMISSIONER OR SOME OTHER FORM OF A POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE.

5. RICHARD'S RELATIVE OPTIMISM IS SHARED BY OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS DELEGATION. THESE MEETINGS HAVE ENCOURAGED RICHARD TO BELIEVE HE CAN KEEP THE EVENTS OF THURSDAY AND FRIDAY UNDER CONTROL. CATTO

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